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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council expresses concern at continuing intimidation and security problems in the Rwandese refugee camps, particularly in Zaire; welcomes agreement to deploy 1,500 Zairian security forces in camps.

+ WFP warns Rwanda regional operation faces critical shortages of food and cash; scarce reserves earmarked for world-wide emergencies being used to meet immediate needs.

+ Fighting continues around Bihac safe area following Bosnian Serb infantry attack; UNPROFOR calls fighting clear violation of cessation-of-hostilities agreement.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations Kofi Annan completes review of UNOSOM II withdrawal operations; calls on Somali leaders to make renewed effort to achieve national reconciliation.

+ Head of United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan says transitional transfer of power mechanism will be assembled in Kabul by 20 February.

+ Georgia and Abkhazia talks conclude in Geneva with understanding on certain provisions of future agreement concerning state within boundaries of former Georgia SSR.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs says donor fatique and lack of media attention reasons for decline in response to humanitarian appeals.

+ Secretary-General expresses great sadness and profound regret at death of Senator William Fulbright; notes a life dedicated to advancement of international peace, justice, democracy and human rights.

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For information media—not an official record

+ UNHCR Commissioner Sadako Ogata says question of statelessness now on Agency's agenda; welcomes concepts of "right to remain";"right to return" and "right to freedom of movement".

+ Measures to address stepped-up drug trafficking in eastern and western Europe recommended by meeting of drug law enforcement officials; ways to counter money laundering also considered.

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The Security Council today expressed concern at reports of continuing intimidation and security problems in the Rwandese refugee camps, particularly in Zaire. In a statement read out by its President, Legwaila J. Legwaila (Botswana), the Council reaffirmed its condemnation of actions by former Rwandese leaders, government forces and militias living in the camps, to prevent the repatriation of the refugees.

The Security Council welcomed the agreement between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of Zaire to deploy 1,500 Zairian security forces and a UNHCR liaison group to improve security in the Rwandese refugee camps in Zaire. It urged Member States to provide resources for that effort. The Council expressed its concern for the safety of the international relief workers and agreed with the Secretary-General's assessment that the situation was potentially destabilizing for the subregion as a whole.

The Council encouraged the Government of Rwanda to continue to provide a framework for action to be taken to repatriate the refugees, to promote national reconciliation, and reinvigorate the political process. It called for continued international support for the Rwandese Government in its task. It also encouraged the international Tribunal for Rwanda in its work, as well as efforts to rebuild the local judicial system.

The Secretary-General was requested to make any further recommendations necessary for ensuring security in the camps, as soon as possible, and to report on the subject in the light of the outcome of the upcoming regional conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons that the UNHCR is organizing with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Bujumbura, Burundi, 15-17 February.

Meanwhile, High Commissioner Sadako Ogata left yesterday for the Great Lakes region in Africa, where she will be meeting officials and going to refugee camps in Zaire, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. The trip will focus on the conference in Bujumbura.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) has warned that the Rwanda regional operation faces critical shortages of food and cash, which is seriously affecting its efforts to assist 3 million refugees and displaced people in Zaire, United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. As a result, the WFP

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has been forced to use scarce reserves, which will have a major effect on its capacity to respond to emergencies elsewhere in the world this year. The WFP still needs 153,000 metric tons of food to provide adequate supplies to the refugees up until July.

Daan Everts, Deputy Executive Director in charge of WFP global operations, said resources to feed mainly women and children are drying up faster than they can be replenished with new donations. In 1994, the Rwanda operation absorbed one third of WFP's global emergency food supplies, and it was critical that attention be focused on the issue of repatriation and the rehabilitation of Rwanda, Mr. Everts said. This year, the WFP will support repatriation programmes for the 2.1 million refugees from Rwanda in surrounding countries of asylum.

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In the former Yugoslavia, fighting still raged around the Bihac safe area, following the Bosnian Serb army infantry attack yesterday in the areas of Pedro Polja and around Klokot, where the water reservoir for Bihac is situated . A United Nations spokesman said the attack appeared to have been building up for some weeks and was in clear violation of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement.

In Sarajevo yesterday, Bosnian Serb forces launched an attack on an unoccupied Bosnian army bunker in the vicinity of the Jewish cemetery, the spokesman said. The bunker sustained two hits and United Nations military observers liaising between the two sides prevented the incident from escalating. It was the biggest violation of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement in the Sarajevo area since it was signed 1 January.

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The Under-Secretary-General for United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations, Kofi Annan, said today that much of what had been achieved in Somalia was vulnerable to the threat of renewed conflict. Mr. Annan had just completed his three-day visit to Somalia, where he reviewed the coordination mechanism for the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II).

However, Mr. Annan stressed that Somalia was a different place than it had been three years ago. People had been able to resume their lives, and in many regions, local government had been established. Education and health facilities had steadily improved, harvests had been good and farmers had produced surplus food for their own communities.

Nevertheless, the future of the country was still in the balance, he said, and it was up to the Somali leaders to build on the real achievements of the past three years and to make a renewed effort to achieve national reconciliation for the establishment of a broad-based government.

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Talks between the Georgia and Abkhazia parties have concluded in Geneva. The chairman of the negotiations, Ambassador Edouard Brunner, said the parties reached an understanding on certain provisions of a future agreement concerning a state within the boundaries of the former Georgia SSR, including the establishment of a federal legislative organ and a supreme organ of executive power. The parties will continue to work on other provisions of the future agreement at negotiations which will be resumed at the expert level in Moscow next week. On the problem of displaced persons and refugees to Abkhazia, it was reaffirmed that their return was a humanitarian problem which must be resolved without delay.

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The head of the United Nations special mission in Afghanistan, Ambassador Mahmoud Mestiri, informed the Secretary-General today that the transitional transfer of power mechanism will be assembled in Kabul by 20 February. According to a United Nations spokesman, this was a significant development since the transfer of power would take place in a peaceful and cooperative manner. Then, an effective cease-fire would take place throughout the country.

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Donor fatique and lack of media attention had resulted in a decline in the overall response to humanitarian appeals, according to Peter Hansen, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Mr. Hansen told correspondents at Headquarters today, that since mid-1992, when the Department started compiling complete data, the shortfalls in appeals response had increased. Of the $3.5 to $4 billion required each year, only some $2.5 billion had been mobilized. The drop in funding had come at a time when the need for humanitarian assistance was growing.

However, the response to different appeals varied, Mr. Hansen said. A past appeal for the former Yugoslavia had received almost 96 per cent of the amount requested and one for Rwanda had garnered nearly 92 per cent. Whereas, an appeal for Iraq had received only 26 percent of the amount needed, which had led to decreased humanitarian aid to that country. As a result, 400 United Nations guards placed in northern Iraq to protect humanitarian aid were cut to less than 90. An appeal for Afghanistan had received a third of the amount asked for, and one for Angola only half the funding required. Mr. Hansen called the response to a recent funding request for human rights monitors in Rwanda "particularly disappointing" with only a third of the needed amount pledged.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today expressed great sadness and profound regret at the death of Senator William Fulbright, who he described as a distinguished American, a man of law, a teacher, and a prominent legislator. In a statement, the Secretary-General said Senator Fulbright's life was dedicated to the advancement of international peace, justice, democracy and human rights. The Senator was also a strong believer in the ideals of the

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United Nations and many individuals benefited directly or indirectly from his years of public service.

The Secretary-General said he had benefited directly from Senator Fulbright's work, when in 1954-1955 he spent a year as a Fulbright Research Scholar at Columbia University, New York. He would always be grateful to Senator Fulbright for a valuable opportunity to broaden his education. Mr. Boutros-Ghali extended his heartfelt sympathy and deepest condolences to the Fulbright family on their tragic loss.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, has said her agency's field officers not only observed human rights violations, but reported them to the relevant authorities. She was addressing the Commission on Human Rights meeting in Vienna, where it is debating economic, social and cultural rights, the right to development and the international human rights treaties and bodies.

Ms. Ogata said the question of statelessness had now been placed on her Office's agenda. She welcomed the fact that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had embodied the concepts of the "right to remain" and the "right to return" in the "right to freedom of movement".

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High-level drug law enforcement officials from Europe and North America have expressed alarm at evidence that the Latin American cocaine cartels are directly targeting central and eastern European countries for illicit drug trafficking. Representatives from 38 countries concluded the Third Meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies in Vienna by recommending measures to address the region's drug control concerns.

Money laundering was another major focus of the Meeting, which noted that drug criminals with cash to launder took advantage of the lack of basic financial regulations in certain countries. It called for international legal assistance to States in the process of introducing anti-money-laundering legislation. It also recommended that in certain cirmcumstances, reversing the burden of proof regarding the lawful origin of alleged proceeds of crime be considered.

Criminal drug organizations also posed serious threats to democracy, particularly to countries in transition, participants said. In eastern Europe, corruption, the use of violence to intimidate the public and infiltration of government agencies threatened the stability of the State. The Meeting called on Governments to develop institution-building programmes and on financial institutions to incorporate crime prevention measures into development assistance programmes in eastern European countries.

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